

Message Text

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71

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-10

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SECDEF

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

USNMR SHAPE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

UNCLAS LONDON 03081

DEFENSE FOR IQA, ODDR&E. CSAF OSAF

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UK. NATO, PFOR BEXP, AWACS

SUBJ: AEW/AWACS - USEFUL SUPPORT FOR AWACS FROM A BRITISH

MP

1. JULIAN CRITCHLEY, CONSERVATIVE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
FOR ALDERSHOT, A MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY DEFENCE

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COMMITTEE. AND CHAIRMAN OF THE DEFENCE COMMITTEE OF THE

WESTERN EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY, HAS WRITTEN AN ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN THE TIMES OF 26 FEBRUARY, STRONGLY URGING SECRETARY OF DEFENCE MASON TO PUT BRITISH "MONEY WHERE HIS MOUTH IS" IN SUPPORT OF AWACS. THE ARTICLE, ENTITLED "WE MUST NOT WELSH ON NATO'S EARLY WARNING SYSTEM" -- WITH A SUB-TITLE "PREFERENCE FOR A BRITISH SYSTEM THAT EXISTS ON PAPER COULD HARM THE WEST" -- ARGUES THAT A RESULT OF A BRITISH REFUSAL TO PAY ITS SHARE OF AWACS "WOULD DEPRIVE NATO OF A SYSTEM, THE TECHNOLOGY OF WHICH WOULD GIVE THE WEST NOT ONLY VITALLY IMPORTANT WARNING-TIME, BUT THE CAPABILITY OF WINNING THE WAR IN THE AIR. WERE THE BRITISH TO WELSH, MORE HARM WOULD BE DONE TO NATO THAN ANYTHING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE ALLIANCE IN THE PAST, SAVE WITHDRAWAL OF FRANCE FROM THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION".

2. CRITCHLEY ARGUES THAT IF BRITAIN IS NOT PREPARED TO PAY "A REASONABLE SHARE OF THE COST OF AN AEW SYSTEM" AND WERE BRITAIN TO "GO BACK ON ITS COMMITMENT, THERE CAN BE LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE WHOLE PROGRAMME WOULD COLLAPSE". THE ARTICLE NOTES MASON MAY BE "TEMPTED TO FLIRT WITH AN AEW NIMROD" AND CRITCHLEY CONCLUDES THAT IF BRITAIN DITCHED AWACS IN FAVOR OF A BRITISH SYSTEM "THE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE ALLIANCE WOULD BE MOST SERIOUS. THE GERMANS WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO BUY BRITISH IN ANY EVENT."

SPIERS

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